Explore

THE EASTERN PANHANDLE OF WEST VIRGINIA

WEST VIRGINIA WELCOMES YOU

Just a short one-hour drive from the Washington, D.C. area, discover West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle. The Mountain State's most vibrant region is rich in history and scenic beauty.

If you don't feel like driving, take Amtrak's "Floridian" route, which operates daily between Washington, D.C., and Chicago and passes through the Eastern Panhandle with stops in Harpers Ferry and Martinsburg. Or you can take the Maryland Rail Commuter (MARC), which operates Monday through Friday between Martinsburg and Washington, D.C., and has a stop in Harpers Ferry as well.

However you get here, you will quickly find out the Eastern Panhandle is a place you will want to return again and again. Six historic towns—**Charles Town, Harpers Ferry, Martinsburg, Bolivar, Ranson**, and **Shepherdstown**—all surrounded by gorgeous countryside serve as the backdrop for modern life offering world-class lodging, dining, shopping, and cultural activities in Berkeley and Jefferson counties.

The influence of the Washington family can be felt throughout the eastern panhandle. The **Washington Heritage Trail** was established to follow the footsteps of George Washington and loops through the Panhandle. This National Scenic Byway highlights various museums, historic districts, parks, and other sites of historic significance in the area. *(Note: some locations are private).*

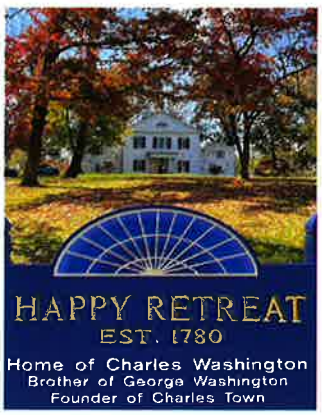
History comes alive when you visit **Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.** Tour the U.S. Armory and Arsenal held by John Brown and his army for three days in 1859. Browse through unique shops and then head across the bridge and hike up to Maryland Heights for the most spectacular view of Harpers Ferry and the Shenandoah Valley. The home of Civil War spy and femme fatale **Belle Boyd** is in Martinsburg and open to the public. Visit that, then explore the **Martinsburg Roundhouse**, once burned by General Stonewall Jackson with a secret tunnel in the home of a Revolutionary War general.

The Eastern Panhandle is known for its wonderful selection of dining venues offering contemporary cuisine in fun, eclectic settings, many with spectacular views and outdoor dining options. Don't miss the endless wine selection at **Brix 27** in downtown Martinsburg, a casually sophisticated atmosphere where every seat feels like a cozy corner for reconnecting with friends. Take in views of the beautiful Potomac River as you enjoy delicious German and American cuisine prepared by master chefs at the **Bavarian Inn Resort & Brewing Company** in Shepherdstown.

HISTORY IS HAPPENING HERE

In 1775, General Washington issued a call for Virginia Volunteer Riflemen. The famous **Bee Line March** to Cambridge began in Shepherdstown and covered 600 miles in just 24 days. The Civil War changed the nation forever. Civil War markers, battle sites, and museum exhibits share this transformative story and rich African American history throughout Jefferson County.

Famous for **John Brown's historic raid** and our deep ties to the Washington family, Harpers Ferry, Bolivar, Ranson, Shepherdstown and Charles Town celebrate our past while still being contemporary and sophisticated communities. Each town offers fabulous local dining, boutique shopping, and comfortable lodging. Jefferson County has deep ties to **George Washington** and his family. In fact, Charles, George's youngest brother, founded the city of Charles Town and the county, which is home to six Washington family homes.



Jefferson County's strategic location at the gateway into the Shenandoah Valley made it a target for both North and South during the Civil War. Follow in the footsteps of famous abolitionist, John Brown and visit the arsenal, trial site, museum, and even a reading room where future Lincoln assassin John Wilkes Booth performed Shakespearean readings to entertain attendees of the John Brown trial.

The area's historical significance is so great that almost the entire town of Harpers Ferry is designated a historic district. **Harpers Ferry National Historical Park** was established in 1944 and is administered by the National Park Service, which does a wonderful job of recreating the feel of antebellum history. The **Lockwood House** in Harpers Ferry became the first schoolhouse in Jefferson County, and it then grew into **Storer College**—the first institution of higher learning in the state of West Virginia for African Americans.

ENDLESS Outdoor Adventure

Jefferson County features walkable downtowns and famous hiking trails all interconnected for easy access. Highlighted by the world-famous **Appalachian Trail**, we have miles of scenic hiking and biking trails to explore. The **C&O Canal Towpath** is a smooth, level trail, perfect for hiking or biking. From the C&O Canal Towpath, long-distance hikers and bicyclists can connect to the **Great Allegheny Passage**, a combined rail-trail route that spans 335 miles. Hikers can also follow part of the 2,200-mile-long Appalachian Trail, with its midpoint at Harpers Ferry. The view of Harpers Ferry and the Shenandoah Valley is exceptional from the overlook on the **Maryland Heights Trail**. These and dozens of other trails run throughout the county.

Fly through the sky on a zipline or conquer the rapids on a guided trip with **River Riders Family Adventure Resort** or **River & Trail Outfitters**. From a relaxing afternoon tubing down the Potomac to the thrill of conquering the rapids on the Shenandoah, you can enjoy a river experience perfect for your tastes. Bring the kids to the **Harpers Ferry Waterpark** for a day of fun. The inflatable waterpark floats on a scenic private quarry and features slides, trampolines, monkey bars, and more.

Opening this summer, the **Great Bungee Company** will open its newest location in Harpers Ferry. Take the legendary water-dip bungee jump, a spine-chilling 150-foot plunge above a sparkling spring-fed oasis is the ultimate adrenaline experience.

Come back in the winter to try the all-new **Snow Riders** tubing park with 12 lanes and one of the longest tubing hills on the east coast.

AN UNEXPECTED DINING SCENE

For over 45 years, the Asam family has been hosting friends and neighbors to the **Bavarian Inn Resort & Brewing Company** in Shepherdstown for relaxing getaways, gourmet meals, special occasions, and the finest in guest comforts. Perched on a spectacular bluff overlooking the Potomac River, this 11-acre European-inspired boutique resort offers comfort, elegance, and world-class food and service.

Downtown Shepherdstown is highlighted by **Alma Bea**, a unique and incredible dining experience and home to 2026 **James Beard Award** finalist, **Chef Mary Ellen Diaz**. Elevated Appalachian entrées are prepared with bold flavors and top-notch techniques. **Bistro 112** is a neighborhood favorite offering French cuisine from locally sourced ingredients. The outside garden seating space is magical.

In Harpers Ferry/Bolivar, **Kelley Farm Kitchen** is the first area vegan restaurant and provides mouth-watering meals that will be appreciated by vegans and non-vegans alike. Or find a range of fresh goods, including cinnamon rolls, biscuits, scones and West Virginia's best pepperoni rolls at **Bolivar Bread Bakery**.

Ortega's Taco Shop has been famous for the "best taco in Charles Town." Featuring locally sourced meats, cheeses, and produce, If a cold beer and pub food is more your style, look no further than **Abolitionist Ale Works** for fun, flavorful and unique beers for every palate. In nearby Ranson, **Bagel Chicks Bakery** is the hot breakfast and lunch spot serving New York style bagels, pastries, and sandwiches.

Magical Towns

Charles Town, named for George Washington's youngest brother, was home to several members of the Washington family for many years. Charles laid out his namesake town in 1787 on 80 acres of land adjoining his estate, **Happy Retreat**, naming streets after his brothers and his wife, Mildred. Today, the streets of Charles Town are lined with historic homes and structures, like the Jefferson County Courthouse, the only courthouse in America to have held two treason trials—the trial of abolitionist John Brown and the **Battle of Blair Mountain** labor rebellion trial.

Shepherdstown's charm is unmistakable—and irresistible. The town has a way of wrapping its arms around you. The historic structures, dining destinations, one-of-a-kind shops, and bucolic scenery draw vacationers from around the country. In fact, many people who visit or attend college at **Shepherd University** don't ever want to leave and end up making the town their home.

The town of **Ranson** puts you in the center of it all. Whether you're strolling down North Mildred Street or setting off on the **Route 9 Bike Path**, visiting unique shops or relishing a craft beverage, you'll find an experience that matches your passions—and your personality.

Where the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers meet, the picturesque little town of **Harpers Ferry** hugs the steep hills and ravines at the water's edge. Heralded for its significant role in the construction of the U.S. railroad system and as the location of **Storer College** that educated former slaves, Harpers Ferry is best known as the place in which abolitionist **John Brown** led his infamous raid on the federal armory, an event that is said to have been a catalyst of the Civil War.

The quaint town of **Bolivar** is encircled by the **Harpers Ferry National Historical Park**. The Potomac River flanks the town to the north and the Shenandoah River to the south making for stunning views and endless outdoor recreation opportunities. A town of roughly 1,000 people, Bolivar is known for its friendly people and downhome hospitality. Located within minutes of many historical attractions and nearby recreational facilities it is the perfect homebase for your Jefferson County getaway.

FOLLOW OUR TRACKS THROUGH TIME

Nestled at the gateway of the stunning Shenandoah Valley, **Martinsburg** offers access to big-city amenities while maintaining the charm of small-town living. Just a little over an hour west of Washington, D.C., where rivers meet mountains and history happens, Martinsburg is the perfect destination for lovers of history. From George Washington to geocaching, railroads to rivers, Martinsburg is at the heart of amazing stories and historic significance.

History courses deep through the streets of Martinsburg. General Adam Stephen, the town's founder, fought alongside George Washington as his second in command during the French and Indian War. He also served during the Revolutionary War. **Major General Adam Stephen's house** is a national landmark. Made from locally quarried limestone, the building even has a basement entrance to the natural underground tunnel system that snakes below town.

Martinsburg's prominence as a transportation center led to its importance to both sides during the Civil War. The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad first crisscrossed the town with tracks in 1841. These tracks later became a prime route for hauling troops and supplies, which made it a target for attacks. By the Civil War's conclusion, the besieged town had changed hands 50 times, and the railroad was left in ruins. In 1866, the B&O Railroad rebuilt the **Martinsburg Roundhouse**, which had a turntable to service locomotives. An architectural marvel, it's the only remaining roundhouse worldwide with a cast iron frame and was the site of the first labor strike in America in 1877. Seasonal Saturday and Sunday tours of the Roundhouse Center are available.

Espionage also marks a chapter in Martinsburg's storied past, courtesy of Civil War spy Belle Boyd. This spirited young lady relayed messages about Union activities to Stonewall Jackson. Her reconnaissance career led to imprisonments, but she ultimately secured release and went on to write and act. The **Belle Boyd House** is where she grew up and now serves as a museum about Berkeley County's history. Next door is the **Berkeley County Historical Society Archives Center**, which contains a treasure trove of family records, photographs, maps, and microfiche.

The area boasts several stops along the **Washington Heritage Trail** driving tour, which identifies unique historical sites along 127 miles of the Eastern Panhandle. Berkeley County's must-visit locations include the Morgan Cabin, Green Hill Cemetery, and Mills Gap, which offers a panoramic view of farmlands.

DISCOVER MARTINSBURG

FOLLOW OUR TRACKS THROUGH TIME

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A COUNTY FULL OF FLAVORS

What once began as a family horse farm is now serving up good times with moonshine. **Black Draft Distillery** is the first distillery in Berkeley County since Prohibition. Black Draft produces whiskey and bourbon using unique and all-natural ingredients sourced less than 10 miles away. Try seasonal flavors at this locally owned distillery!

If you prefer beer, head to **Amani Brewing**, the county's only brewery. Amani has a beautiful taproom and a fenced-in area to enjoy a great craft beer in the outdoors. It is also a popular spot for morning coffee and catching up with friends.

Right outside of Martinsburg is a picturesque farm with magnificent orchards that's one of the region's hidden gems. Whether on the quest for fresh crops or simply a refreshing afternoon outdoors, **Orr's Farm Market** has all the best pickings. They sell produce, host festivals, and lead educational tours. Orr's Farm Market makes for a great family outing any time. From seasonal activities and crafts to berry-plucking and pumpkin-picking, this is one farm that seems to grow memories.

Every cook knows that having the freshest ingredients makes for the most mouthwatering dishes. A quick jaunt off Interstate 81, **Taylor's Farm Market** in Inwood offers a wide selection of West Virginia crops, foods, home decor, and gear six days a week.

EXPLORE THE OUTDOORS

Whether you're visiting for a long weekend or an extensive stay, there are plenty of ways to get adventurous during your visit. Berkeley County is known for its lush forests, bountiful biking and hiking trails, bird watching spots, and world-class geocaching.

Sleepy Creek Wildlife Management Area features 23,000 acres of public access land. The site offers seasonal bird watching, rugged bike trails, hiking trails, canoeing, kayaking, and plentiful hunting and fishing opportunities. **Sleepy Creek Lake** has largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie, and northern pike to catch and boasts three access sites with parking and restrooms.

The **Yankauer Nature Preserve** is historic farmland that is now forested. The backside of this 104-acre preserve overlooks the Potomac River. The site is one of the best locations for a spring native wildflower walk. The park hosts a variety of events throughout the year for both children and adults, ranging from bird walks and tree planting to turtle time and summer day camps.

The **Poor House Farm Park** is a 207-acre county-owned park, providing numerous recreational and leisure activities. With seven miles of jogging and hiking trails and 3.5 miles of walking/bike trails, there is plenty of space to explore.

Berkeley County is home to more than 57 active caches and multiple geo trails for explorers of all experience levels. **Geocaching** is a treasure hunt that combines technology and the outdoors to send people looking for clues using GPS tracking. Caches are hidden or are in plain sight and can look like anything—from a birdhouse to a fake rock.

For a peaceful walk in the woods it's hard to beat the **Tuscarora Trail**. The Tuscarora is a 250 mile-long spur trail of the Appalachian Trail with trailheads near Luray, Virginia and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

A THRIVING DOWNTOWN

Stroll historic downtown Martinsburg and soak in the incredible architecture and well-preserved buildings that line a walkable experience filled with shops, restaurants, and culture.

North Queen Street is full of unique finds. Pick a one-of-a-kind masterpiece from the vintage posters, African tribal art, and original artwork at **Queen Street Gallery**. Open seven days a week, the **West Virginia Glass Outlet** marvels shoppers with its rainbow array of hand-blown glass. Stop and smell the roses at **Jordan & Hess** featuring home décor and floral arrangements for special events or bouquets for those "just because" moments.

Whether grabbing a quick bite to eat while shopping or planning an elegant date night, Martinsburg has restaurants to satisfy any craving. **Stoney's Whiskey Wine & Raw Bar** features the largest selection of whiskey, bourbon, and scotch in the Eastern Panhandle. **Thai Martinsburg** serves a wide array of authentic Thai food and is a popular gathering spot for locals. For those nights when a well-crafted cocktail is the plan, **The Young American** delivers classic and creative martinis in a stylish downtown setting. **Saretto** features classic Italian dishes by Chef Paul Stearman, paired with a handcrafted cocktail menu.

Everything's better with chocolate. In 1998, the family-run **DeFluri's Fine Chocolates** relocated its factory and showroom to a 1930s-era building on North Queen Street. The chocolatiers have been satisfying the town's sweet tooth ever since. A cultural landmark constructed in 1913, the **Apollo Civic Theatre** continues to host stage productions, movies, and community events.

With endless opportunities for outdoor recreation, impeccable historical landmarks, and vibrant shopping and dining, Martinsburg is a town of rich traditions and stunning new discoveries.